

# Mind & Body



Uniting providers across Robins AFB to share their healthful insights

## In This Issue:



**Slow Down and Simplify... page 1**



**Memory and Maintenance... page 1**



**Autism Spectrum Disorder and Horticultural Therapy... page 3**



**Momentum: Fostering a healthy workplace culture... page 4**



**Mind Games... page 6**



**Join Us!... page 7**

## Mental Health Tip of the Week:

**Laugh.** Laughter strengthens your immune system, increases energy, diminishes pain, and protects you from the toxic effects of stress.

### Slow Down and Simplify

By: Felisha Garcia, Psy.D.

How are you doing? “Tired” seems to be my daily response. I took on way too many things and I am now constantly physically and mentally tired. Ever feel this way? I feel like a hypocrite at times because I am constantly advocating self-care.

*Continued on page 2*



### Memory and Maintenance

By: Dr. Jeff Hoffman

Imagine yourself sitting in a meeting. In front of the room is a supervisor telling the group of a new, high profile, work job that the General has eyes-on. As they lay out the plan and all the assignments for working the project you find yourself actually remembering every word of the plan. Congratulations! -You have found yourself at the intersection of memory and maintenance.

*Continued on page 2*

**“I only watch the History Channel. Their news is less depressing because I know we already survived it.”**



## **Slow Down and Simplify** (continued from page 1...)

Lately I feel helpless with the constant messaging of negativity in the world, the growing unhappiness of those in their working environments, and the grimness that seems to be the general feeling everywhere. How do you cope? I am now preaching what I am practicing and that is to *slow down and simplify* your life. What is truly important to you? Well focus on those things! This is not the time to take on big projects, make a huge financial purchase, or make any extreme decisions. Pull the reigns a bit and make some breathing space in your life to be able to relax and focus on your own goals.

Part of this “slow down and simplify” mentality is to “pick your battles.” EVERYTHING can be upsetting at this time, so I encourage you to decide on what is important to speak up on and let the rest go! It is not healthy to constantly upset yourself. Those who are doing the best right now are simply making the best of each day, not expecting too much, and being grateful (i.e., “I don’t have COVID,” “I have a job,” “My family and I are safe.”). So pause, take out a piece of paper, and write down what’s really important to you and positive/inspiring statements or quotes, and at the top of that paper, in capital letters, please write “Slow Down and Simplify.”

## **Memory and Maintenance** (continued from page 1...)

Around us, every day, you see people making it a point to go for a healthy walk, stretch or do isometric exercises at their desk or the ever popular - going to the gym. We do these things because, once aware of the necessity for physical fitness, we want to be able to stay fit to live, love and laugh more in this life. Not to mention the ability to better carry out our duties in maintenance in supporting the war-effort at Robins AFB.

This begs the question -Do we give the same amount of attention and concern for our own mental fitness. Do we daily exercise our minds and strengthen our memory? If not then we can start by learning some simple memory techniques, many of which might astonish you in how rapidly you can start remembering better and more fully and leading to improved overall all-around learning both in the job and at home. These methods can include: 1) Method of Loci / Memory Palaces, 2) Linking Method, and 3) Mnemonic Peg System. Just as weight training strengthens the physical body, memory exercise strengthens the mind. The application of any or all of these methods can result in a maintenance mechanic, technician, or office support team member remembering essential data quicker and more efficiently. With very little practice and effort any individual can increase their memory, alertness, and overall mental fitness by exercising their minds toward a greater mental fitness resulting in a more efficient production in fulfilling our Mission at Robins AFB.

Reference links to Memory Systems:

Method of Loci/Memory Palaces - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Method\\_of\\_loci](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Method_of_loci)

Mnemonic Peg System - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mnemonic\\_peg\\_system](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mnemonic_peg_system)

Linking Method - [https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTIM\\_01.htm](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTIM_01.htm)

## Autism Spectrum Disorder and Horticultural Therapy

By: Donna Hunt

The goal of the Horticultural Therapy is to help a client obtain specific goals using plant based activities. For clients with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), socialization skills and improved self-esteem can be found in a garden setting. The HOPE Gardens horticulture therapist partnered with Wave Autism Center to use garden techniques to support sensory processing challenges in a two-day workshop.

The theme of the workshop was garden-to-plate. The first night, clients began with using vegetables to physically represent how a plant grows using a plant template. Shredded carrots represented roots, celery for the stems, spinach for leaves and cherry tomatoes for flowers. We then made a growing box to demonstrate how plants grow towards the light.

On the second night the clients made pizza pots where they can grow fresh ingredients for pizza. The pots included garlic, tomatoes, peppers and oregano. The clients also decorated H.O.P.E rocks which can be found at HOPE Gardens.

H.O.P.E Rocks are hand-painted rocks that are left randomly at Hope Gardens and around the Base. Finders can either keep the rock or leave it in another public space. People are highly encouraged to make and leave rocks with inspirational messages.



# EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Magellan  
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## Momentum

*Fostering a healthy workplace culture*



### You can help build a positive workplace

Numerous studies show that when managers and other leaders promote an atmosphere of positivity within their workplaces, the workforce becomes more engaged, motivated and productive—in fact, 21% more productive than teams with low engagement (Gallup). This in turn reduces workplace stress, absenteeism and turnover. Here are some ways to boost positivity:

- Embody your organization's values of an encouraging, progressive culture in your daily interactions in order to increase team member interest and buy-in.
- Show support for your staff's physical and mental well-being by creating a work environment that values team collaboration, physical wellness and stress reduction.
- Prioritize communication by respecting and empowering people to contribute in creative ways. Meetings and brainstorming sessions will become more productive. Regularly keep your staff updated on organizational initiatives and how they align with your staff's roles.

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[www.AFPC.AF.MIL/EAP](http://www.AFPC.AF.MIL/EAP)

Contact your program

## 24/7/365

for confidential, no-cost help for you and your household members.

**Live Webinar**—Take part in an online event—*Cultivating Civility in your Company Culture*—on Wednesday, September 22. Register [here](#).

### Constructing a collaborative culture

**Frequently extend praise to others.**

Recognizing accomplishments and praising your team members in meetings, emails or at celebratory events can truly boost their engagement. Even small gestures of thanks are valuable.

**Contribute to the new hire onboarding process, including training and mentoring.**

New additions to the organization will obtain a positive first impression when they see a collaborative, supportive culture from the outset.

**Put things in perspective for staff members by reframing occasional work disappointments.** Demonstrate an optimistic, grateful attitude even during rough times so you can steer employees back toward a more productive mindset.

*Additional Sources: Workplace.com, Insperity.com, Tralient.com, Concentra.com.*

# EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

## Mind Your Mental Health

### September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

This observance raises awareness and connects individuals experiencing suicidal ideation to treatment services, in addition to offering support to those previously affected by suicide.

- Suicidal thoughts can affect anyone regardless of age, gender or background. Suicide often stems from an untreated mental health condition.
- If a person seems in danger of hurting themselves, call 911 immediately.
- If you're concerned about a suicide but don't know what to do, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255). Trained counselors are available 24/7 to speak with you or your loved one.
- If you're uncomfortable talking by phone, send a text to the National Alliance on Mental Illness at 741-741 for free crisis support via text message from a crisis counselor.
- Reassure the at-risk individual with words such as, "I might not be able to understand exactly how you feel, but I care about you and want to help."

Visit [www.MagellanHealthcare.com/About/MYMH](http://www.MagellanHealthcare.com/About/MYMH) or call your program for confidential mental health resources.

## Working on Wellness

### Optimizing your team's cohesion

- Introduce some new, measurable, attainable team goals that have meaning for your business, such as boosting customer satisfaction scores or reducing product returns by ten percent by the end of the fiscal year.
- Plan occasional team-building exercises away from the office setting. Some lighthearted group activity can transfer a positive vibe back into the office—promoting better communication, cooperation and understanding between team members.

## Showing Support

### Sowing civility at home and work

- If you're moved to say something about someone and it clearly isn't kind, stop yourself before speaking. Remember that it's not a sign of weakness to choose gentler words.
- Always be respectful, even when you disagree, and be willing to apologize when you're wrong about something. Let go of past conflicts and missteps. Focus on the present and move forward.



## Managing Work-Life Balance

### Support your team through challenges

If you've arranged a meeting to resolve an internal conflict, set ground rules that require respectful behavior. Remind participants to control their emotions. Also, ensure that all staff members complete comprehensive safety training for their positions. Should a traumatic workplace incident occur, assure your staff that distressing emotions are normal.

## EXERCISE YOUR MIND

**Each of the word combinations below represent a common phrase. Can you figure out all three?**

*(answers below)*

1. BAD wolf

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2. S  
L  
O  
W

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3. | R | E | A | D |



**Do you see the musician and the woman's face?**



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## **ABOUT THE WRITERS:**

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Donna Hunt is a Certified Horticulture Therapist and Veteran. She is extremely kind and talented, and assists with multiple services on base including group aerobics at the Base gym. She is also resourceful and often spends her time repurposing items for Hope Gardens. To contact Ms. Hunt, email [HuntDonna26@gmail.com](mailto:HuntDonna26@gmail.com).

Dr. Jeff Hoffman is the Training Administrator with the Soldering Program at the WR-ALC /OBHC. He is author of "The Art of Academic Advising". Jeff has also been inducted into the International Brotherhood of Magicians – Ring 9 as a Stage Performing Mentalist. To contact Dr. Hoffman call DSN: 468-2870 or email at [jeffrey.hoffman.17@us.af.mil](mailto:jeffrey.hoffman.17@us.af.mil).